

### LIST OF THE CLAIMS

Please amend independent Claims 1, 8 and 15 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for determining an optimal bid for an item in a market, said method comprising:
  - a) selecting characteristics of said market;
  - b) selecting a bidding model;
  - c) estimating a structure of said market, wherein unobservable variables are expressed in terms of observable bids by inverting said bidding model;
  - d) determining a bid function; and
  - e) determining said optimal bid, which is a prediction of an amount a bidder should bid, wherein said optimal bid is calculated based upon a received evaluation criteria and said bid function.
2. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step a) comprises:
  - receiving a first user input, wherein said first user input comprises information identifying an item to be bid on;
  - accessing a database;
  - retrieving historical bids data from said database;
  - retrieving auction characteristics data from said database, wherein said auction characteristics data comprise information relating to historical auctions of items similar to said item to be bid on;
  - outputting said historical bids data; and
  - outputting said auction characteristics data.
3. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step b) comprises:
  - receiving auction characteristics data;
  - accessing a database;
  - retrieving from said database said bidding model; wherein said bidding model is selected based on a corresponding relevance of said auction characteristics data; and

outputting said bidding model.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step c) comprises:
  - receiving said bidding model;
  - receiving historical bids data;
  - transforming said historical bids data to a sample of inverted bids, wherein said historical bids data are transformed by inverting said bidding model;
  - estimating a structure of said market, wherein said sample of inverted bids receives application of statistical density estimation techniques to obtain said structure;
  - and
  - outputting said structure.
5. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step d) comprises:
  - receiving a second user input;
  - receiving a structure;
  - generating a bid function, wherein said bid function is based on said structure and said second user input; and
  - outputting said bid function.
6. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 5, wherein said second user input comprises:
  - an auction format;
  - a valuation of said item; and
  - an expected number of rival bidders.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising:
  - a bus;
  - a memory interconnected with said bus; and

a processor interconnected with said bus, wherein said processor executes a method for determining an optimal bid for an item in a market, said method comprising:

- a) selecting characteristics of said market;
- b) selecting a bidding model;
- c) estimating a structure of said market, wherein unobservable variables are expressed in terms of observable bids by inverting said bidding model;
- d) determining a bid function; and
- e) determining said optimal bid, which is a prediction of an amount a bidder should bid, wherein said optimal bid is calculated based upon a received evaluation criteria and said bid function.

9. (Original) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step a) comprises:

- receiving a first user input, wherein said first user input comprises information identifying an item to be bid on;
- accessing a database;
- retrieving historical bids data from said database;
- retrieving auction characteristics data from said database, wherein said auction characteristics data comprise information relating to historical auctions of items similar to said item to be bid on;
- outputting said historical bids data; and
- outputting said auction characteristics data.

10. (Original) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step b) comprises:

- receiving auction characteristics data;
- accessing a database;
- retrieving from said database said bidding model, wherein said bidding model is selected based on a corresponding relevance of said auction characteristics data; and
- outputting said bidding model.

11. (Previously Presented) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step c) comprises:

- receiving said bidding model;
- receiving historical bids data;
- transforming said historical bids data to a sample of inverted bids, wherein said historical bids data are transformed by inverting said bidding model;
- estimating a structure of said market, wherein said sample of inverted bids receives application of statistical density estimation techniques to obtain said structure;
- and
- outputting said structure.

12. (Original) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step d) comprises:

- receiving a second user input;
- receiving a structure;
- generating a bid function, wherein said bid function is based on said structure and said second user input; and
- outputting said bid function.

13. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein said second user input comprises:

- an auction format;
- a valuation of said item; and
- an expected number of rival bidders.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium for causing a computer system to execute the steps in a method for determining an optimal bid for an item in a market, said method comprising:

- a) selecting characteristics of said market;

- b) selecting a bidding model;
- c) estimating a structure of said market, wherein unobservable variables are expressed in terms of observable bids by inverting said bidding model;
- d) determining a bid function; and
- e) determining said optimal bid, which is a prediction of an amount a bidder should bid, wherein said optimal bid is calculated based upon a received evaluation criteria and said bid function.

16. (Original) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step a) comprises:

- receiving a first user input, wherein said first user input comprises information identifying an item to be bid on;
- accessing a database;
- retrieving historical bids data from said database;
- retrieving auction characteristics data from said database, wherein said auction characteristics data comprise information relating to historical auctions of items similar to said item to be bid on;
- outputting said historical bids data; and
- outputting said auction characteristics data.

17. (Original) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step b) comprises:

- receiving auction characteristics data;
- accessing a database;
- retrieving from said database said bidding model, wherein said bidding model is selected based on a corresponding relevance of said auction characteristics data; and
- outputting said bidding model.

18. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step c) comprises:

- receiving said bidding model;

receiving historical bids data;  
transforming said historical bids data to a sample of inverted bids, wherein said historical bids data are transformed by inverting said bidding model;  
estimating a structure of said market, wherein said sample of inverted bids receives application of statistical density estimation techniques to obtain said structure;  
and  
outputting said structure.

19. (Original) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step d) comprises:

receiving a second user input;  
receiving a structure;  
generating a bid function, wherein said bid function is based on said structure and said second user input; and  
outputting said bid function.

20. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 19, wherein said second user input comprises:

an auction format;  
a valuation of said item; and  
an expected number of rival bidders.

21. (Cancelled)